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TO	
CASE NUMBER	
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Your Reference: 11243P1 GB/CET MH
Application No: GB0408581.7

25 June 2004

Dear Sirs

Patents Act 1977:

Combined Search and Examination Report under Sections 17 and 18(3)

Latest date for reply:

6 June 2005

I enclose two copies of my search and examination report.

By the above date you should either file amendments to meet the objections in the report or make observations on them. If you do not, the application may be refused.

Publication

I estimate that, provided you have met all the formal requirements, preparations for publication of your application will be completed soon after **2 November 2004**. At this time you will receive a letter confirming the exact date when the preparations for publication will be completed. This letter will also tell you the publication number and date of publication of your application.

Withdrawal/amendment

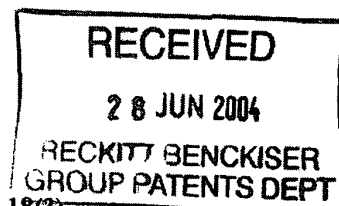
If you wish to withdraw your application before it is published you must do so before the preparations for publication are complete. **WARNING** – after preparations for publication are complete it will NOT be possible to withdraw your application from publication.

¹Use of E-mail: Please note that e-mail should be used for correspondence only.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Application No : GB0408581.7

Page 2

25 June 2004

If you wish to file amended claims for inclusion with the published application you must do so before the preparations for publication are completed. If you write to the Office less than 3 weeks before 2 November 2004 please mark your letter prominently:

"URGENT - PUBLICATION IMMINENT".

Yours faithfully

Mr Hal Young
Examiner

Important information about combined search and examination

I also ask that you take note of the following points. These might have a bearing on the future stages of your application because the examination report has been sent to you before your application has been published.

- (a) You may file voluntary amendments before making a full response to my examination report. We will publish with your application any new or amended claims you file voluntarily or as a full response, provided that they are received before preparations for publication are completed. It would help us when you file amendments before publication if you could **prominently indicate** in a covering letter whether or not the amendments are intended as a full response to the examination report.
- (b) If you file a full response to the examination report before your application is published I will consider it as soon as possible. However, if this would disrupt the publication of your application, I would have to delay taking any action until the application had been published. This delay could be up to 3 months, depending upon when we receive your response.
- (c) There is another situation when there might be a delay between you filing a full response and the Patent Office responding to it. This would arise if you met all my objections but your application had not or had only recently been published. I could not report the outcome of my re-examination until I was satisfied that the search was complete for documents published before the priority date of your invention and that anybody interested in the application has had three months following publication of the application to make observations on the patentability of your invention.
- (d) Provided that the requirements of the Act have been met, I can send your application to grant as early as three months after publication. Before doing so I will bring the original search up to date and raise with you any further objection that might result from this top-up search. However, there is a possibility that at that time I may not have access to all the patent applications published after the priority date of your invention and of possible relevance to your application. If this is the case I would have to complete the search after grant and if necessary raise any new found novelty objection then.



Application No: GB0408581.7

Examiner: Mr Hal Young

Claims searched: 1-13

Date of search: 24 June 2004

Patents Act 1977: Search Report under Section 17

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular reference
X,Y,P	X:1-10 Y:11,12	GB2384704 A (BOOTS) see whole document.
Y	11&12	EP0101767 A (LAZARUS) see abstract and figs.
Y	11&12	FR2426549 A (FRESSE) see abstract and figs.
X	1-10	US3823471 A (STONE) see whole document noting flexible portion 9.
X	1-10	GB2030909 A (WILKINSON) see whole document.
A		GB2364502 A (RECKITT)
A		DE29608647 U1 (RIEDER)

Categories:

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.

Field of Search:

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC^W :

A4V; B4B

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC⁰⁷



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A45D; B26B

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report

WPI, EPODOC, JAPIO



Your ref : 11243PI GB/CET MH
Application No: GB0408581.7
Applicant : Reckitt Benckiser (UK) Limited

Examiner : Mr Hal Young
Tel : 01633 814800
Date of report : 25 June 2004

Latest date for reply: 6 June 2005

Page 1/2

Patents Act 1977

Combined Search and Examination Report under Sections 17 & 18(3)

Novelty

1. The invention as defined in claims 1-10 is not new because it has already been disclosed in the following documents:

GB 2384704 A (BOOTS) see whole document.

No amendment of your claims will be needed in respect of the above document if you can show that the priority date of your invention is not later than the priority date of the relevant disclosure in this document.

2. The above document clearly shows a spatula arrangement for use in removing depilatory product and hair from the skin of a users body wherein the device comprises a head and handle hinged together at a mid point to provide a flexible joint. There does not appear to be anything within the above listed claims which is able to distinguish the present invention from the prior art.

Inventive step

3. The invention as defined in claims 1-12 is obvious in view of what has already been disclosed in the following documents:

EP 0101767 A (LAZARUS) see abstract and figs.

FR 2426549 A (FRESSE) see abstract and figs.

US 3823471 (STONE) see whole document noting flexible joint 9.

GB 2030909 A (WILKINSON) see whole document.

4. While EP0101767 and FR2426549 both relate to shaving apparatus it is nonetheless considered that the disclosure of a combined razor and lather reservoir is equivalent to the apparatus proposed in claims 11 and 12. In this respect these claims merely relate to a combination of a scraper with a container holding a fluid and this combination is not considered to offer any technical advantage to other similar combinations and as such it is deemed the invention of these claims are lacking in inventive step. The above documents disclosing a combination of apparatus are only examples that were found during the search



Your ref : 11243PI GB/CET MH
Application No : GB0408581.7

Date of report: 25 June 2004
Page 2 / 2

[Examination Report contd.]

and if claims are retained relating to such combinations then the search may need to be extended in due course.

5. In addition US3823471 and GB2030909 also both relate to shaving devices. They both disclose apparatus comprising a handle and a head interconnected by flexible means and while they are directed to the purpose of cutting body hair it is nonetheless considered that the adoption of their features in a depilatory scraper would be an obvious modification to a skilled artisan working in the field of hair removal. Thus they are considered to render claims 1-10 as lacking in inventive step.

6. Amendment of the claims is required in order to satisfy the above objections to a lack of novelty and a lack of inventive step together with any consequential amendment to the description where necessary.